

although MacDougall has admirably added more to communion, he appears to have neglected the eschatological ‘God-man’s’ person and work.

Scott W. Sunquist. *Explorations in Asian Christianity: History, Theology, and Mission*. (336 pp.) Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017. (336 pp.) ISBN: 9780830851003

Daniel J. Cameron
Chicago, USA

Scott W. Sunquist currently serves as the president of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. He served previously as professor and dean at the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary and has numerous publications in Asian Christianity, missiology, and global Christianity. In the fifth volume of the *Missiological Engagements* series from InterVarsity Press sits Sunquist’s volume entitled *Explorations in Asian Christianity*. Sunquist’s book began as a series of lectures, book chapters, and journal articles. It is structured in four parts (Asia surveys, History, Missiology, Education) serving the overall goal in attempting to “better understand Asian Christianity” (p. 2).

In part one, entitled “Asia,” Sunquist seeks to give us a taste of Asian Christianity throughout history and of the particularly Asian flavor of global Christianity. As Christianity grew and developed in Asia through the rise of Islam, European and Asian colonialism, and the fall of the Japanese and European imperialism “it continues to be a minority religion” (p. 22). As Christianity developed in Asia, it was “less ordered and more diverse” than Christianity was in the Roman Empire (p. 35). In fact, many of the theologians exiled by the councils in the West found acceptance in the East where they held their own councils. Often “called to reorganize the church after persecution: little theological discussion ensued” (p. 36). The pragmatic character of Christianity in Asia permeated the earliest movements of ecumenism in Asia too as they “were more of a pragmatic than a theological commitment” (p. 41). This held true as the ecumenical movement developed from a desire to see a “greater organic and conciliar unity” evolve into “a movement to cooperate in the social, cultural, and political spheres” (p. 48). In the midst of all of this, Protestant Christianity found its foothold through British East India Company, Dutch United East India Company, and the Danish East India Company. While these companies had business motivations in mind they certainly opened the door for Protestant missionaries. This led to several early missionary movements in Asia which “set patterns and established values that have continued to be characteristic of Asian evangelicalism” (p. 53).

In part two, entitled “History,” Sunquist seeks to rethink “how we study history” and therefore “how we can or should view Christianity as a global movement” (p. 4). This section opens with a critique of recent Christian historiography arguing that research concerning historical Christianity has been defined by “confessional and geographic factors” (p. 94). He argues for an approach that focuses on the development of a movement in relation to the crucified Jesus rather than the growth of an institution. The record of historical Christianity is understood as the mission of God in relation to cruciformity which, he argues,

Christianity in Asia illustrates well. Chapters six to eight look at the historical reasons for the shift in historiography, the latter two focusing on the shift in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Sunquist believes that the writings of Christian history should never be separated from missiology arguing that the cross is the foundation of the trajectory of Christianity. Part three builds on the previous part by exploring different historical happenings in Asia through the lens of missions. Chapter nine seeks to make sense of the development of liberationist views concerning sociology and politics out of a more conservative, presbyterian church specifically in Korea. Chapter ten is a missiological experiment (which he says can be applied to other regions in Asia) arguing for a “missiology of place,” saying that the region of Shandong in China is highly influential for the spread of Christianity in China due to cultural, geographical, political, and religious reasons (180). Chapter 11 examines how the “three self principle” developed differently in China and Korea by examining four mission theorists. Chapter twelve focuses on the impact of migration on mission studies. In his words, “this essay is a type of primer for thinking about the history, theology and meaning of migration and Christian mission” (p. 6).

The final section of this book focuses on “one of the most important tools in the toolbox of missionary work: education” (6). The chapter is composed of three chapters united in one common goal, to answer the question “what is appropriate and effective Christian education in Asia” (p. 7). Chapter thirteen evaluates the work of three missionaries in three different countries over a period of 100 years. Sunquist points out the similarities in their work arguing that we should not seek to copy them but to learn that “with a little careful reading, a dash of cultural empathy, and some understanding of missionary motivation, we may begin to understand how Christian movements in Korea, Ethiopia, and China have developed through the many challenges of decolonization, communism, and globalization” (p. 262). Chapter fourteen is a historical analysis of the development of higher education in Asia. This book concludes with the fifteenth chapter which examines education in the earliest period of Asian Christianity mainly in Persia by looking at the influence of the West in both the 6th and 20th centuries.

Sunquist has done a marvellous job of exploring the development of Asian Christianity through the lens of missiology. This book is a helpful introduction to Christianity in Asia and a critique of how we understand its development. It would be a helpful text in a missiology/missiological theories course as a case study for how we can understand the organic development of Christianity in other countries. It also serves as both a helpful introduction to Christianity in Asia for anyone interested, and a useful guide to those ministering in an Asian context. This book was well written and easy to read. I commend Sunquist for his contribution to this series.